

Life Group Homework

Instructions for Christians Waiting for Christ's Return

James 5:7-12

Let's Get Started

In the first six verses of **James 5**, James had some very hard-hitting words for wealthy people who abused the righteous poor. In **verses 7-11**, James shifts his focus, moving from the condemnation of the faithless and abusive rich – to comforting, encouraging, and strengthening the faithful and abused poor. He shows them the type of attitude a follower of Jesus has during persecution and trials.

What do the following scriptural examples show us about what disciples of Jesus can expect in this lifetime?

Job 5:7

John 16:33

Acts 14:22

2 Timothy 1:8

For you, what is the most challenging aspect of waiting for the return of Christ?

Let's Go Deeper

Read **James 5:7-12**: *“Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord, is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful. But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.”*

Five Instructions as we await the Second Coming of Jesus

1. Be patient (vs. 7-8a)

For you, what is the most challenging part of “waiting and being patient” for the return of Christ?

What does **Acts 1:7** tell us about trying to predict the exact time Jesus is going to return?

What do you see in **John 15:1-8** about what a follower of Jesus is supposed to be doing while we wait on Jesus to come again?

2. Strengthen your resolve (vs. 8)

Sometimes it’s hard to maintain our focus and resolve to “stay in the game” as disciples. What types of things can distract you or make it difficult for you to “stay in the game” in your role as a practicing disciple of Jesus?

Read **Revelation 3:15-16**. Jesus indicates that luke-warm, casual Christians would be “spit out of his mouth.” Some people are “hot” for being a disciple and some are “cold.” What’s so bad about being somewhere in the middle?

3. Don’t complain about other Christians (vs. 9)

Ephesians 4:29 says, *“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”*

I have never met any Christian who has never let any “corrupting talk” come out of their mouth. It is a huge temptation, and James is showing us that God really cares about how we talk about each other.

Maybe wearing a mask these days helps a little bit, but seriously, how do we guard against grumbling about other brothers and sisters in Christ? What helps you put the brakes on when you’re tempted to talk smack or complain about someone? Discuss with your group.

4. Persevere in hardship and live in hope (vs. 10-11)

When interviewed after he got hired to replace Walter Alston, a future Hall of Famer, Tommy Lasorda was asked: 'Don't you feel pressure on you?' His response was: 'Want to know something? I'm worried about the guy who's going to have to replace me.' -Tommy Lasorda

Here in **verses 10-11**, James is giving Christians a life-lesson about how to respond to pressure. **Psalm 118:5-6** says, “*Out of my distress I called on the LORD; the LORD answered me and set me free. The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?*”

Have you ever thought about the excessive pressure we put on ourselves, worrying about what people think about us or what they can do to us? There are many Scriptures in the Bible that can act as a “pressure release valve” when we shift our focus from what man thinks of us to what God thinks of us.

Find and write out at least one encouraging Scripture that you can rely on to remind you of what **God** thinks of his children, his faithful disciples.

What is the Scripture? _____

What does it say?

What about this Scripture helps you want to be an overcomer, gives you hope, and motivates you to get going and stay faithful to your calling?

Let's Live It Out Together

5. Always live in integrity (vs. 12)

“But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.” -

James 5:12

Close your group time with the following question for members to weigh in on: How does a disciple of Jesus maintain the highest level of integrity as an example of one who believes and lives out the Gospel of Jesus?

Don't forget to pray for one another, for those in authority, and the spreading of the Gospel.